1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1981
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622 unconsciously fostered by him. A brief account of our visit to
156 Dambani will best show the present condition of these people.

While in the jungle we were suddenly met by four Veddas,
177 who greeted the Arachi in a deep and apparently fierce tone, he
576 returning the greeting in the same manner. To our surprise these men came up to one of us (C. G. S.), shook hands, and then turned and led us to their village, on the way to which we passed a couple of "tame" buffalo that tried to charge
[361] us. There were three huts in the village and the headman's wife—not at all shy or diffident—after shaking hands took one of us (B. Z. S.) by the arm and led her into a hut. This
[342] had a good roof and walls of sticks, only one side being closed by bark slats, it was full of pumpkins and other chena
126 produce, which were however soon removed. We then sat down to take vocabularies, as the talk going on around us sounded quite different from Sinhalese and they professed not to understand our interpreter who was unable to follow them. So we
●574 spoke through the Arachi. The headman's wife brought us each
609 some honey and yams and commanded us to eat. We sucked
43) the honey comb, but that did not satisfy her and she tried to feed one of us (B. Z. S.) with yams herself and to pour water down her throat. After giving us a few Vedda words, the Vidane (headman) began to talk very angrily and then stalked out of the hut. He complained that we had not given him presents and refused to speak another word until we gave him something. Other men came into the village making a total of about 10 or 11 grown men and some boys, but only two middle-aged women, the wife of the Vidane and another, so it was evident that there were other huts in the neighbourhood. We told the Vidane that our carriers would bring presents and made him and a few other men come back to the hut. But after every two or three words there were more angry protests and our interpreter explained that "other white men had not treated them so." When they raised their voices their talk sounded fierce, every word being shouted with emphasis and accompanied by scowling looks. Then we found out from the Arachi that these like the Danigala Veddas were "show Veddas" who had been utterly spoilt by presents from "distinguished visitors," some of whom

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
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had actually been to the village. They had been sent for often to see others at Wewatte and Alutnuwara bungalows, and for even greater folk had been taken to Kandy. And so they had learnt to shake hands and had picked up exaggerated ideas of their own importance and the value of their information, and expected a present for every remark they vouchsafed. It was a horrible change from the courteous behaviour of the Sitala Wanniya cave Veddas.

As the Dambani folk were so very unfriendly we began to hope the carriers would not come at all that night, there was nowhere for them to sleep, and we thought the Veddas might resent their presence. They told us repeatedly that "Sinhalese men would not dare to come to their village," in spite of the fact that there were two petty Sinhalese traders in the village at the time, who did not even trouble to go away before dark, but seemed naturally to expect a night's lodging, which was granted them without any fuss, and there appeared to be no difficulty about language with them. About six o'clock our servants and the carriers arrived, and curiously enough instead of resenting the intrusion the Veddas seemed very impressed by their number, and presumably our importance, in having so many dependents, for they became much more friendly.

The next morning early, we set the phonograph going with a Vedda song: immediately the whole village crowded round us, intensely interested. They recognised the song and said it was very good. The Vidane then sang a song into the machine and was quite excited to hear it repeated, but again began his demand for presents although besides a rupee we had now given white cloth to him and the other men from whom we had got vocabularies. Having obtained records we realised that it was impossible to do any good work among such spoilt people and decided to go to Belligala. We offered some beads to the headman's wife, but she said the string was not long enough; this annoyed us and we asked her if she would prefer not to have any, and on her repeating they were not enough we put them away.

The Dambani men said they did not know to which *warugé*

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
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word arrived from the elder of the district. Then one of the archers accompanied him to the boundary which took between two and three hours' walking. Here he had once more to wait until word arrived from the elders of this district, whereupon the first guide handed him over to a second and then returned. In this way the second guide brought him to a third, and the process continued until he had had more than twelve guides, being over seven days on the way before he reached the province of Batticaloa and the flat district which extended to the coast, and is inhabited by Tamils. He and his ten or twelve companions never suffered any want on the way, as the Veddahs supplied them with food, consisting of good dried venison which was preserved in honey, ground nuts (probably yams) and fruit. But none of the Veddahs spoke a word with him or his companions because it was so prescribed by their customs[1]."

Nevill's account of the life led by both the wilder and the more sophisticated "forest" Veddas has been quoted on pp. 81 and 82, in the chapter on Family Life. Nevill's experience was chiefly gained among the Veddas of the Bintenne, but if rather less emphasis be laid on the hut built "close to a place where water can be got," and it be realised that even during the hot dry season rock shelters are the common homes of the wilder Veddas to the east of the Badulla-Batticaloa road, all that he says on this subject can be implicitly accepted.

Commenting upon Nevill's account, the Sarasins point out that since trespassing on land belonging to another group leads to fierce quarrels, the condition described by Nevill must be taken to imply that the territory of each group includes the whole or a part of one considerable hill or rock *massif*. Our experience enables us to confirm this suggestion, and it will be shown later that not only are hills the property of particular groups, but that subject to the rights of the group there is also personal property in hills. Text figure 4 is a sketch map of the territory of the Henebedda Veddas, and roughly shows the position of their caves, which are named Bendiyagalge, Pattiavelagalge, Hitibeminigalge, Punchikiriammagalge, Uhapitagalge, Maladeniyagalge and Kirawanbalagalge. The last is almost

[1] *Op. cit.* p. 479.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5



the other heel. Python fat is used for fractures. *Nagamaru-alla* has a great reputation as an aphrodisiac, less among the Veddas than among the Moors and Tamils. *Bing kohomba* (*munronia pumila*) gathered in the hills, and *kansa* (*cannabis indica*) grown surreptitiously, are always barterable. Besides the lesser poisons used for stupefying fish, there are the deadly *neeagalla-alla* (*gloriosa superba*); *mansa-kolle* (*laportea crenulata*); *thea-kadurugedde* (*cerbera odallam*) and *kirinthea*.

There can be little doubt that much of the *cannabis indica* obtainable in Ceylon is grown in the forests by the encouragement of Moors. Traffic in the drug being illegal, the plant is cultivated clandestinely in sequestered jungle clearings or scattered amidst the vegetation of *chenas*. Though the plants fetch a good price, they are hardly worth the trouble and risk involved in tending them; and they say that "money got from *kansa* never stays in the hand." Not only have the plants to be watered for at least three months, but, very often, just as the crop is ready for harvesting, a thief helps himself to it. The commodity is conveyed to the lonely coast or the high road in the dead of night, along unfrequented game trails, in bags containing nests, grain, or dried meat.

A poignant story concerns the discovery of the *nagamaru-alla*, that esteemed aphrodisiac so difficult to find. A Vedda boy and his sister were travelling alone in the forest, when a shower of rain drove them to seek shelter under a tree. As is usual with Veddas when they rest, the boy stuck his arrows into the ground. Then, taking out of his pouch of monkey skin a chew of *demata* bark, he shared it with his sister; and, plucking out an arrow from the ground, placed on its point a little lime and gave it to her. She had scarcely tasted this when she began to manifest unsisterly familiarity. Her brother, incensed and shamed, drew his bow and killed her on the spot. Overcome by sorrow at what he had done, he debated in his mind as to why his sister, so good before, should suddenly have behaved so shamelessly. It occurred to him that the explanation might lie in the spot the arrow had been implanted; digging there he found a yam his arrow had transfixed. Thus was its named derived *nagamaru-alla* or yam that killed a sister; the Tamils call it *thangai kolai* which means the same thing. The marks of the tragedy are said to be evident to this day in the red spots that fleck the flower and leaf. I have seen the plant, a ground orchid, twice, but only the white-flowered variety not the reputedly more potent mottled. The slender stalk, bearing a delicate flower about half the size of a lupin, grows out of two downy ovoid yams.

The proper home of the Vedda is the *galge* or cave; and in these until recent years, the wilder of them exclusively lived. Now they only serve as occasional haunts, and therefore often have other occupants besides Veddas, chiefly bears; for this reason no Vedda approaches an unoccupied cave without warning: "*Cho-ho-ho, cho-ho-ho*," he shouts. "*Kiribala, karia, karia, cho-ho-ho, cho-ho-ho*." A snarl and a rush often greet the words. These rock-shelters are invariably hidden away among trees and boulders, and are extremely difficult to find except by those who know them.

Many of the caves are spacious, open and inviting; others dark and forbidding. Some source of water, such as a stream or spring, is usually at hand. The sloping roofs of the caves often present such crude picture galleries as we saw at Henanagalla, also wasps' nests, and the clustering